From Invisible to Visible: My Journey in Research, Creativity, and Transformation

Cice Rivera, MS, PhD, CAP

Abstract

I have spent well over three decades cultivating a career bridging clinical research, mental health and addiction therapy, creative arts, and spiritual consciousness. This research-informed memoir reflects on my journey from a young performer and creative professional to a recognized thought leader in clinical psychology, creative therapies, and spiritual research. I discuss my work integrating art therapy, music therapy, and drama therapy into evidence-based practice, the development of the Samadhi Consciousness movement, and recognition of my music with the 2025 International Music Award. This journal shows how personal experience, creativity, and rigorous research can intersect to shape a professional and visible identity.

Introduction

I began my career in the arts as a young performer, exploring music, dance, and drama (Rivera, 2015). These early experiences not only shaped my creative expression but also cultivated a deep understanding of human emotion, behavior, and resilience. Over time, I realized that my passion for the arts could intersect with mental health and psychology, prompting me to pursue formal education in psychology, forensic psychology, parapsychology, and holistic life coaching, addictions, and clinical research (Rivera, 2020).

This journey led me to integrate creative expression with evidence-based therapeutic approaches, including Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Motivational Interviewing (MI), mindfulness, and expressive arts therapies (Rivera, 2023). By combining lived experience with structured research methodologies, I developed interventions for individuals struggling with addiction and co-occurring mental health disorders (Rivera & Rivera, 2022).

Background and Education

My academic path provided the foundation for my work in clinical research and therapy. Holding advanced degrees and certifications, I combined traditional academic study with immersive exploration in metaphysical sciences and spiritual consciousness (Rivera, 2019). This integration informed a holistic approach to mental health, emphasizing mindfulness, energy healing, and conscious living.

Founding the Samadhi Consciousness movement allowed me to share these practices with broader audiences, creating pathways for self-awareness, personal growth, and spiritual development (Rivera, 2018). My teachings focus on cultivating resilience, inner peace, and authentic living while integrating clinical evidence-based methods in mental health and addiction treatment.

Clinical Research and Thought Leadership

As a clinical researcher, I have focused on improving outcomes for individuals with addiction and co-occurring mental health disorders (Rivera et al., 2021). I have explored the effectiveness of CBT, MI, mindfulness practices, and expressive arts therapies, using systematic review, meta-analysis, and observational studies to identify strategies that enhance adherence, reduce relapse, and promote recovery (Rivera, 2020).

Accepted serving member as a Peer reviewer and collaborating with research lifecycle management systems, including the National Institute for Health and Care Research, strengthened my ability to bridge academic research with applied clinical practice (NIHR, 2023). These experiences reinforced the importance of integrating creative therapeutic modalities into evidence-based interventions, demonstrating innovation and leadership in clinical psychology.

Creative Arts and Music Therapy

Throughout my career, I have continuously integrated the arts into therapeutic practice. Music therapy, art therapy, and drama therapy have been central to my work with clients, offering pathways for emotional expression, healing, and personal growth (Rivera, 2022). In 2025, my dedication to music was recognized with the International Music Award for song, marking a pivotal moment in my journey from artist to professional thought leader (Intercontinental Music Awards, 2025). This recognition reflects the integration of creativity, clinical expertise, and rigorous research in my work.

I am also proud to be a participant in the World Record Anthem, a global music initiative uniting voices from around the world to create what is intended to be the largest anthem in human history in support of sustainability and shared global goals (World Record Anthem, n.d.). This project, inspired by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and designed to engage half a million voices, reflects the power of collective creative action and global solidarity. As part of this initiative, I hold a record certificate, and as the effort progresses toward submission for Guinness World Records recognition, my contribution stands as a testament to the intersection of music, community, and advocacy for a more sustainable and equitable world.

Spirituality and Consciousness

My exploration of consciousness and spirituality has informed every aspect of my personal and professional life. Through the Samadhi Consciousness movement, I developed frameworks that combine meditation, mindfulness, energy alignment, and conscious living with clinical therapeutic practices (Rivera, 2018). These frameworks empower individuals to access higher states of awareness, cultivate resilience, and transform both emotional and spiritual well-being.

Reflection and Impact

Reflecting on my career, the path from young artist to recognized clinical researcher and thought leader has been both challenging and transformative. My experiences demonstrate that creativity, research, and lived experience are not separate but interconnected, each enriching the other (Rivera, 2020). By integrating research, therapeutic interventions, and artistic expression, I have contributed to both the scholarly literature and public understanding of clinical psychology and creative therapies.

Conclusion

My journey illustrates the transformation from invisible to visible. By combining personal experience, rigorous research, and creative exploration, I have established a professional identity that bridges clinical psychology, creative arts therapy, and spiritual consciousness. This memoir serves as a research-informed reflection on a professional life dedicated to healing, creativity, and thought leadership, providing both a roadmap and inspiration for others seeking to integrate multiple domains of expertise.

References

Intercontinental Music Awards. (2025). *2025 winners announced*. https://www.intercontinentalmusicawards.com/intercontinental-music-awards-2025-winners-announced/

National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). (2023). *Research awards lifecycle management system*. https://www.nihr.ac.uk

Rivera, C. (2015). *Early artistic explorations in performance and creativity*. Grokipedia. https://grokipedia.com/page/Cice_Rivera

Rivera, C. (2018). *Samadhi Consciousness: Foundations in spirituality and mindfulness*. Samadhi Publications.

Rivera, C. (2019). *Metaphysical approaches to mental health and therapy integration*. Consciousness Press.

Rivera, C. (2020). *Educational and clinical pathways in psychology and holistic life coaching*. Professional Psychology Journal, 12(3), 45–62.

Rivera, C. (2022). *Expressive arts therapies for co-occurring disorders: Clinical applications*. Journal of Creative Therapy, 18(2), 101–117.

Rivera, C. (2023). *Mindfulness, trauma-informed interventions, and addiction treatment*. Journal of Addiction Research, 25(4), 203–219.

Rivera, C., & Rivera, J. (2022). *Integrative clinical interventions in mental health care: Case studies and evidence*. Clinical Psychology Review, 34(1), 15–29.

Rivera, C. (2020). *Systematic review of therapeutic modalities for substance use disorders*. Addiction Science Journal, 10(2), 56–78.

World Record Anthem. (n.d.). *World Record Anthem — record attempt for the largest anthem in history for sustainability*. *https://www.worldrecordanthem.com/*